

The British government puts the heat on a spy who came in from the cold

by Jon Steinberg

Convicting people without telling them what the charge is raises large questions—especially when the subject is covert operations by the CIA and the prosecutor is the British government.

"They just sit there at a table across from me and my lawyers and it's pretty much like talking to a sponge," commented Philip Agee during the London appeal hearing before three retired civil servants which confirmed the order for his deportation on February 16. "They seem to look down at their table and their papers and doodle, but we paid very careful attention to their reactions. They weren't interested in any trip to Cuba or the Soviet Union, or anything else relating to the communist countries. They wanted to know about Jamaica, Angola, joint operations between the CIA and British intelligence, and my second book."

Agee first landed on the Central Intelligence Agency's enemies list by writing *Inside the Company: CIA Diary*. The book was about his nine years as a CIA operative, including assignments in Ecuador, Uruguay, and Mexico. He believes that the basic reason for the expulsion order is a decision by the CIA and perhaps other levels of the U.S. government "that I have got to be dealt with, and that my work somehow has got to be stopped or impeded and disrupted."

Replying to similar accusations by members of his own Labor Party in Parliament, Home Secretary Merlyn Rees told the House of Commons, "I reached my decision after the most careful consideration. I must emphasize that it was taken solely in the interests of the security of this country." Rees shrewdly bolstered his case by simultaneously ordering the deportation of Mark Hosenball, a 25-year-old American reporter for the London *Evening Standard*.

Sources for this article include the Agee/Hosenball Defense Committee in London, Rodney Larsen, and an interview with Philip Agee by Howard Dratch.

In earlier work as a freelance journalist, Hosenball co-authored a 1975 article in *Time Out*, a London entertainment and muckraking weekly, which named what he claimed was the entire CIA station staff in London. He followed this up with an exposé of CIA subsidies for Forum World Features, a London-based syndication agency which was forced to cease operations abruptly. The

Forum director, journalist Brian Crozier, denied knowledge of the CIA connections, but Hosenball kept on Crozier's trail when he moved to the Institute for the Study of Conflict, a London "think tank," taking the Forum files with him. The largest donor to the Institute is a Quentin B. Salzman of the Foreign Affairs Research Group in Washington. Others who would like to receive funds from this source may have difficulty, since neither appears to exist.

These exposures may have embarrassed the British government, and when Hosenball published an article in the pilot edition of a new magazine, *The Leveller*, tentatively naming two members of the British intelligence service (MIB), they had grounds for accusing him of publishing "information prejudicial to the safety of the servants of the Crown."

Philip Agee regards England as an ideal base for research on his second book, and he has carefully avoided any involvement with exposes of his host government. Nonetheless, he admits, "it may well be that some of the things I have done might unknowingly have concerned joint operations with British Intelligence."

The British intelligence service worked closely with the OSS, predecessor to the CIA, during World War II, and the ties have remained intimate since. Known CIA operations in Britain include subsidies for *Encounter*, a cold-war journal which published numerous articles by right-wing leaders of the Labor Party, and for the European Movement, a group which participated in the successful campaign to bring Britain into the Common Market. Earlier this year a published list of CIA agents in London included a Mark S. Boerner, who was said to have an office and a secretary inside the British Ministry of Defense.

When Philip Agee wrote an article with Steven Weissman for the January issue of *Oui* magazine which said that the CIA had spent up to \$500,000 in Britain recruiting mercenaries to fight in Angola, he was clearly treading on

Learning from experience

Philip Agee's move from a newly acquired house in Cambridge will be a painful one for him, his two sons (now 12 and 15 years old), and Angela Agee, the woman he now lives with. Angela Agee, who is not his wife although she uses his name, has endured worse. A Brazilian, she was active in the student movement in Rio de Janeiro after the CIA-supported coup in 1964. She joined the Revolutionary Communist Party and was forced to go underground when she was 19 years old. A few weeks later she was wounded and captured. The police tortured her with electric shocks and other techniques, brought her to a hospital for an operation on her wounds, and then tortured her again. Weak and exhausted, she confirmed her identity—a capitulation which still distresses her even though she gave them no other information.

After two and a half years in prison she was released and went to Paris, where she met Philip Agee a few months later. Some day she hopes to return to Brazil to rejoin the revolutionary struggle. "We had a lot of petit-bourgeois ideas then," she said in an interview with the London *Guardian*, "but now we know there will have to be an armed struggle. This has happened in every country where there has been a revolution." □

sensitive ground as far as the Labor government was concerned. The appeal board members "seemed to perk up" when this topic came up in the hearing, Agee says, as they did also when the hearing turned to Jamaica, a member of the British Commonwealth. "Certainly the timing of the whole thing relates directly to my trip to Jamaica in September," Agee declares. He went there to speak publicly on the CIA's efforts "through violence and propo-

ganda to turn people away from the government. The order of intention to deport came just a few weeks after that. As we know, the good guys won in Jamaica by a huge majority, and maybe the British government just doesn't want to see that again."

Another element in Agee's Kafka-esque expulsion is the "Polish case." When David Steel, head of Britain's Liberal Party, visited the Home Secretary to protest the deportation order,

Mervyn Rees told him that Agee had been responsible for the death of two British agents "behind the Iron Curtain."

The story first appeared in a report from Murray Segar, the *Los Angeles Times* correspondent in Bonn. Segar's report claimed that as part of his work with the CIA at the 1968 Olympics in Mexico City, Agee had met with Colonel Pawlawsky, a member of the Polish fencing team who was a spy for the West. After leaving the CIA, the story went, Agee revealed this information to East European intelligence operatives, resulting in the well publicized arrest of 120 persons in Poland in 1975.

There are so many holes in the story that Agee urged the appeals board to look into the evidence. Since his cover in Mexico City was an American Embassy post, he was too well known to be dealing with an East European like Pawlawsky. In addition, if he had met Pawlawsky, the CIA would have noted this fact in what is known in Agency parlance as a "damage report" done on Agee after he began publishing the names of Latin American agents. Furthermore, the Polish fencing team travelled to the West many times in the early 1970s, offering ample opportunities for Pawlawsky to defect if the CIA thought he was in danger.

Whether persuaded by the evidence—including information to which Agee and Hosenball could not respond because their request to know the charges against them was denied—or by pressure from the American government, the appeals board affirmed the expulsion on what the National Union of Journalists term "a black day, both for justice and for press freedom." Additional protests have come from other trade unions, most of the British press, and more than 80 members of parliament.

"This shouldn't interfere in the long run, but in the interim it's a major disruption," said Agee when he heard the ruling. Although the order requires both Hosenball and Agee to leave Great Britain by March 1, the ex-CIA operative and his lawyers have developed a new strategy to allow him to remain by moving to Scotland. Although it is part of the same country, Scotland retains its own legal system, and Agee will contend that the Home Secretary's writ does not apply there.

He has been invited to run for rector of the University of Dundee, which follows the Scottish tradition of student elections for the post. His opponent will be the incumbent, Clement Freud, a leader of the Liberal Party and a grandson of Sigmund Freud. Students will therefore have a clear choice as to what kind of analysis they prefer—if the legal system allows Agee to remain. □

Photo: Stuart Gormley/Liaison



Philip, Angela, Philip Jr., and Christopher Agee at their Cambridge, England home.